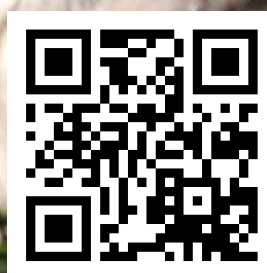


BRITISH INSTITUTE OF FUNERAL DIRECTORS

THE JOURNAL



ISSUE 3





Help support families
and keep babies safe.

Your support saves lives.

The Lullaby Trust raises awareness of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), provides expert advice on **safer sleep for babies** and offers **emotional support for bereaved families**.

We are entirely reliant on donations to ensure that we can continue to help families keep their babies safe and support those that are affected by the death of a baby or young child.

For information about our work and how you can help, visit: www.lullabytrust.org.uk

Bereavement Support: 0808 802 6868

Information & Advice: 0808 802 6869

Office: 020 7802 3200

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IN THIS ISSUE...

05 A LETTER FROM AMANDA PINK

Amanda Reflects On This Month As National President

07 2025 CONFERENCE DETAILS

This Year's Conference Dates, Itinerary and Booking Form

12 BIFD TUTORS START LEVEL FIVE

Tutors are working towards their Level 5 teaching

21 MEMBERSHIP FORMS

This Year's Renewal and Application Forms

31 FIVE YEARS ON

Reflecting on the years since Covid





The CPD Standards Office
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 2023-2025
www.cpdstandards.com

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www.bifd.org.uk



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 Articles & News
 c/o The Editorial Team:*
journal@bifd.org.uk



**National President's
 Chosen Charity**



The Presidential Team:

National President, Amanda Pink:
amandapink@bifd.org.uk

1st Vice President, Clive Pearson
2nd Vice President, Dr Philip Gore
Immediate Past President, Amanda Dalby
admin@bifd.org.uk

Chair of Education, Andrew Floyd:
a.floyd.bifd.edu@gmail.com



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Letter from the National President

Amanda Pink

Dear Members, Associates, Students, and Supporters.

Well, it seems spring has arrived we have had some lovely sunny weather let's hope it continues, it lifts the mood to see the emerging spring flowers knowing summers on its way.

It's been another busy month so far,



I attended the LAFD (London Association of Funeral Directors) Gala Dinner in Park Lane in London to celebrate President Gary Valentine – Fuller year in office it was a wonderful Gatsby inspired event, I caught up with lots of friends old and new discussing the way forward within the funeral profession for any future regulation coming in as it has now happened in Scotland.

I was then up in Leamington Spa for the Diploma exams assisting the education team. Meeting the students who were there sitting their exams brought back the memories of when I did mine, it was a busy weekend for all but fabulous to think these are the next generation of funeral professionals and possible future presidents of our association.

Back to the office to continue processing your memberships renewals which are flooding via email and post, so thank you to those who have renewed so far.

Please remember if you are applying for the licenced membership you do need to have a minimum of 12 hours CPD to continue the licence.

Coming up in the next couple weeks, I will be up to Scotland for the SAIF conference and banquet in early April then straight back for my presidents charity skydive on the 12th of April in aid of the Lullaby Trust.

<https://lullabytrust.dedicationpage.org/charityoftheyear2024>

But remember to save the date for next year's conference 24th – 26th October 2025 at the Copthorne Hotel Slough- Windsor, which we hope to be an excellent weekend of education fun and food. We have started to receive bookings already so will be a busy event; The booking forms will be in the journal for the next few months so please get booked in before it becomes sold out.



Best Wishes to you all,

A handwritten signature of Amanda Pink in black ink.

**Amanda Pink, Dip. FS, LMBIFD
National President, Region G**

LETTER FROM OUR EDITOR

Happy Spring to you all

I can't believe we are in March already, it feels like this year is flying by! I hope you are all well and keeping busy.

I have been busy with preparing for my Race For Life in June, and one thing I did for this was to join a hike in the Peak District, which consisted of a 10 mile walk through Castleton, along Cave Dale, up to Mam Tor, and along to Back Tor, before going back to Castleton. It was only after booking that we realised it was 3x longer than the Race for Life will be, but we had lots of fun.



Start of
the Walk



End of
the Walk

I have done the walk up Mam Tor and to the bottom of Back Tor before with my children and usually it is full of absolutely stunning views for miles around. Not on this particular day! As we climbed higher, it got foggier, so we could barely see anything in front of us, never mind for miles. It was also covered in black ice. How none of us fell I do not know! We left Mam Tor with icicles in our hair.

At the beginning of March I attended the Diploma Exam weekend as a Trainee Examiner, and it was really informative to see things from the other side, since it was only last year that I did my exams, as well as working alongside the other examiners such as Roger Clark (pictured). I am looking forward to going back after my training.



Don't forget to sponsor our National President Amanda Pink on her Skydive next month to raise Money for The Lullaby Trust. The link can be found on our Social Media pages.

All the best,

Kayleigh

43RD ANNUAL BIFD CONFERENCE

24TH – 26TH OCTOBER 2025



The Copthorne Slough-Windsor Hotel
Clippenham Lane, Slough, SL1 2YE

The BIFD Invites You To Conference 2025

National President, Amanda Pink, would like to invite all Members, Fellows, Students, Associates, Presidents of the Kindred Associations and all Guests to the forthcoming Conference and Gala Dinner to be held on 24th - 26th October 2025 at The Copthorne Slough-Windsor Hotel.

The Copthorne Hotel offers comfortable and contemporary facilities, where modern comfort seamlessly blends with the historic Windsor. With 219 spacious and comfortable rooms, the 4-star hotel is the perfect base to feel relaxed and rejuvenated for our Conference Weekend.

From here, you can visit the medieval **Windsor Castle** still in use since the middle ages, see the changing of the guard and experience Windsor's rich history. The hotel is also located very close to **Legoland Windsor** perfect for our guests who would like to attend with their family.



The **Bombay Pavillion Restaurant** offers dishes inspired by the traditional clay oven 'Tandoor' and curries that stay true to their origin.

The **Motion Health Club** provides comprehensive leisure facilities and state-of-the-art gymnasium and swimming pool.

Heathrow Airport is a mere 15 minute drive and is ideally located just outside of central London, just 30 minutes away by train.

The President's Charity 2025

For her Presidential Year, Amanda is supporting The Lullaby Trust.

The charity works to educate and support new parents in the best sleep practices for their babies with the aim to prevent deaths. Their aim is to reduce the level of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) which they have helped to reduce by 81% since 1991 saving over 30,000 babies. They also support bereaved parents following the tragic and devastating loss of a baby or young child and have so far helped over 800 families. A fantastic charity that needs funds to continue its important work and any support provided to our campaign for the Lullaby Trust throughout 2025 and at Conference will be gratefully appreciated.



The itinerary so far...

Friday 24th October 2025

The Board of Directors will be meeting in the afternoon.

After checking into your rooms, Amanda invites you to join her for a 3 course dinner in the hotel function suite.

Saturday 25th October 2025

The AGM will take place in the morning followed by a buffet lunch.

In the afternoon Amanda is planning an educational session...Watch this space for further information.

The evening will start with a Drinks Reception followed by a 3 course dinner with wine, plus cheese & biscuits. We will also have our Diploma Awards Ceremony and Handover of Offices followed by music and dancing until late.

Earlier than 24th or later than 25th October 2025

If you would like to enjoy a longer break, we have secured good rates either side of the Conference, so that you can enjoy Windsor for an extended stay.

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The British Institute of Funeral Directors Conference 2024:
24th – 26th October 2025

The Copthorne Slough-Windsor Hotel
Clippenham Lane
Slough
SL1 2YE

The 43rd BIFD Conference 2025 Rates

1. Friday Evening To Sunday Morning – THE COMPLETE PACKAGE

Friday DinnerDouble Room (per couple) £675
Friday & Saturday Bed & BreakfastSingle Room (per person) £425
Saturday AGM: On Arrival Tea & Coffee
Saturday Lunch Included
Saturday Evening Drinks Reception
Saturday Gala Dinner – Includes 4 Course Meal

2. Friday Evening To Saturday Morning - ONLY

Friday DinnerDouble Room (per couple) £295
Friday Bed & BreakfastSingle Room (per person) £200
Saturday AGM: On Arrival Tea, Coffee & Biscuits

Saturday Lunch Is Available At £30 PP

3. Saturday To Sunday Morning - ONLY

Saturday AGM: On Arrival Tea, Coffee & BiscuitsDouble Room (per couple) £395
Saturday Evening Drinks ReceptionSingle Room (per person) £235
Saturday Gala Dinner – 4 Course Meal Followed by Tea & Coffee
Saturday Bed & Breakfast
Saturday Lunch Is Available At £30 PP

4. The Gala Banquet Dinner Only£85 Per Person

Saturday Evening Drinks Reception
Saturday Gala Dinner – 4 Course Meal Followed by Tea & Coffee

5. AGM ATTENDANCE ONLYFree To All Members & Students

Saturday AGM: On Arrival Tea, Coffee & Biscuits

Saturday Lunch Is Available On The Day At £30 PP

The 43rd BIFD CONFERENCE - 24th – 26th October 2025

The Copthorne Slough-Windsor

BOOKING FORM

Members Name: Membership Number:

Address:

Post Code: Contact Telephone Number:

Email Address: Number of Rooms Required:

Special Dietary Requirements: Yes/No Details of Diet

Arrival Date:/...../..... Departure Date:/...../.....

Attending Partners Name:

Attending Guests Names:

See Rates Page To Complete Form & Payment

Tariff (1) – Full Package

Double Rate: £.....

Single Rate: £.....

Please return, or email, your completed booking form for the appropriate amount to the Conference Co-ordinator and make payment either by Bacs or by Cheque made out to “The BIFD”:

Tariff (2) – Fri to Sat

Double Rate: £.....

Single Rate: £.....

Bacs Payments To:

Sort Code: 60-83-01 - Account Number: 20336550

Tariff (3) – Sat to Sun

Double Rate: £.....

Single Rate: £.....

Mr. David Gresty
C/O The British Institute of Funeral Directors

National Office,
2 Heather Ridge Arcade,

Heatherside,
Camberley, Surrey,

GU15 1AX
07354 847 702

Tariff (4) – Gala Dinner Only

Total Attendees £.....

Tariff (5) – AGM Only

£ No Charge

Email: treasurer@bifd.org.uk

Total Amount Due £.....

Tutors of the British Institute of Funeral Directors Elevate Their Qualifications with Blackpool and Fylde College



In an exciting development for the funeral profession, tutors from the British Institute of Funeral Directors (BIFD) are undergoing a rigorous upgrade of their Level 5 qualifications in collaboration with Blackpool and Fylde College, a respected regional teaching partner of Lancashire University. This initiative not only reflects a commitment to professional development but also aims to enhance the quality of education provided to future funeral directors.

The program, which is set to culminate later this year, involves a comprehensive curriculum designed to challenge and enrich the tutors' existing knowledge and skills. Participants are being put through their paces, engaging in advanced training that covers a range of essential topics relevant to the funeral profession. This proactive approach ensures that the tutors are well-equipped with the latest industry standards and practices.



By working closely with Blackpool and Fylde College, the BIFD is reinforcing its dedication to excellence in funeral service education. The upgraded qualifications will empower tutors to deliver more effective and relevant training to their students, ultimately benefiting the entire sector.

As the tutors progress through this demanding training, they are not only enhancing their own professional capabilities but also setting a new benchmark for the quality of funeral services in the UK. The collaboration between the BIFD and Blackpool and Fylde College exemplifies a forward-thinking approach to education and professional growth in a field that requires both compassion and expertise.



With the completion of their Level 5 qualifications on the horizon, these dedicated tutors are poised to make a significant impact on the future of funeral directing, ensuring that the next generation of professionals is well-prepared to meet the challenges of the profession.

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CONFERENCE NEWS FLASH

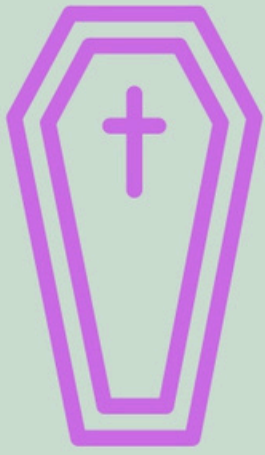
The BIFD Conference 2025 Is Returning to Its Core Mission: Education, Education, Education

Conference 2025 is expected to be well-attended, and bookings are being received quickly. Although there is ample capacity this year, it is advisable to book now and join the mailing list for event updates.

The usual business matters, including the AGM and the Handover of Offices, will be prominent once again, along with our esteemed Education Awards Ceremony and the Gala Dinner. However, this year, President Amanda Pink aims to place a renewed focus on education at the core of our activities.

On Saturday afternoon, following lunch, a series of diverse educational activities are being scheduled. These activities will ideally involve our education team and tradespeople providing training, educational pathways, and demonstrations of products and services to enhance our membership's contributions to the funeral profession.

Watch this space and book now to get on our priority mailing list.....



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2025
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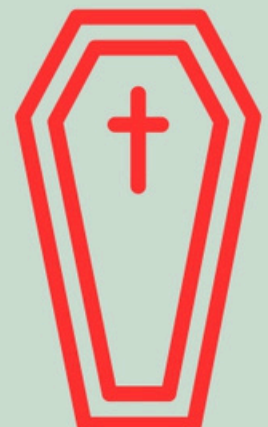
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Age Increase for Child Funeral Charity Applications

The Child Funeral Charity is pleased to advise you that the Charity Commission for England and Wales has agreed that, with immediate effect, we can offer support to families whose child died under the age of 18. This means that we are now able to support families with funerals for babies and children from 12 weeks' gestation up to and including 17-year-olds.

Our aim is to enable families in financial hardship to provide a simple, dignified funeral, and basic commemorative items, for their child or baby. Referrals can be sent in by funeral directors and arrangers and other professionals working with bereaved parents. We will continue to decide each case on its merits, bearing in mind the age of the child and there are updated requirements for successful applications which are on the charity's website, www.childfuneralcharity.org.uk

In terms of timing of referrals, the funeral has to have either not yet taken place, or took place less than four weeks before the date of the application for help. For memorial items, such as plaques or memory bears, the application must be made within one year of the date of the funeral.



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This university-level qualification, accredited by Greenwich University, is a testament to the high standards of education and professional development offered by the British Institute of Funeral Directors. With a curriculum that combines theoretical knowledge with practical skills, you will gain invaluable insights into the intricacies of funeral service, from legal considerations to emotional support for grieving families.

What sets this program apart? In addition to engaging weekend sessions, participants will benefit from additional interactive Zoom meetings, providing ongoing support and fostering a sense of community among fellow learners. This hybrid approach ensures that you can fully immerse yourself in your studies while balancing your personal and professional commitments.

By enrolling in the British Institute of Funeral Director's Certificate in Funeral Service and then the Diploma in Funeral Service, you are investing in a rewarding career that makes a meaningful difference in people's lives.

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Heart of England is first UK Co-op to help unite families with loved ones' lost ashes



Matthew George, head of client services at Heart of England Co-op Funerals.

Coventry's independent Heart of England Co-operative Society is helping to reunite families with the uncollected ashes of loved ones dating back as far as the 1950s.

The Society says it is the first UK co-operative to join a ground-breaking online initiative to address what is a long-standing issue in the funeral sector.

Details of 725 unclaimed remains have been uploaded to The Ashes Register. The urns containing the ashes are being stored at 16 funeral homes in the Co-op's trading area covering Coventry, Warwickshire, and parts of Northamptonshire and South Leicestershire.

The oldest remains are of Alexander Anderson who was cremated at Canley Crematorium, Coventry in 1956. It is estimated that hundreds of thousands of unclaimed urns are sitting in funeral homes across the nation.

Matthew George, head of client services at Heart of England Co-op Funerals, explained that there are many reasons why relatives fail to pick up ashes.

"Sometimes people who have suffered a loss find it very hard to come and collect the ashes as it brings a sense of finality. However, at times it can simply be down to a miscommunication between family members as to who is collecting the cremated remains.

"Sadly, another reason is that the deceased has no known next of kin. Some people also leave the ashes until they pass away themselves so that they can be scattered or buried with their loved ones."

He welcomed the new database, adding that the Society is proud to be leading the way in the co-operative world.

The National Association of Funeral Directors advises that cremated remains should be retained for at least five years. However, the Heart of England Co-op has been holding onto its unclaimed urns for decades.

"We keep them until they are collected by the family," said Mr George. "We have been serving our community for 192 years and we feel a strong duty of care to look after the cremated remains of people whose funerals we arranged. We believe that they need to be afforded the same level of professional care and respect as when they were first brought into our care.

"Details of all the cremated remains in our possession are also diligently recorded and logged within our own databases. The urns are kept in secure locations in each of our funeral branches. Each set of ashes is stored alongside the relevant cremation certification to ensure easy identification."

Whilst most cremated remains are kept at the branch where the funeral was organised, the oldest ones are kept in a special storage area at the Co-op's funeral home in Towcester.

The Ashes Register was set up by Richard Martin to enable the public to register a set of ashes and to create a permanent record of where they were scattered. The unclaimed ashes section of the website is a recent addition.

He said "We initially set up this website to provide a space for people to document a person's final resting place. We are now also aiming to reunite as many people as possible with the uncollected ashes of a relative or loved one. We feel so passionate about history not being lost in time.

"We have received lots of support from leading companies and organisations in the cremation sector on the Ashes Register. The Heart of England is the first co-operative in the whole of the UK to step forward and become involved in the new unclaimed ashes section of the website."

To view Heart of England Co-op's listing for uncollected ashes visit:

<https://ashesregister.com/ashes-sites/category/heart-of-england-co-op-funerals/united-kingdom/>



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Email: admin@bifd.org.uk

Telephone: 0800 032 2733

2025/26 MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL

Please complete this form IN FULL and return it with your payment and any supporting documents, as required.

Name:		BIFD Membership No.:
Address:		
Town:	County:	Post Code:
Telephone:	Email: please print clearly	

I hereby apply to renew my membership in the British Institute of Funeral Directors, as follows:

✓	MEMBERSHIP TYPE	SUBSCRIPTION AMOUNT		
	Licensed Full Member (CPD FORM MUST BE COMPLETED)	£185.00		
	Full Member	£160.00		
	Retired Member (voting)	£ 75.00		
	Retired Member (non-voting)	£ 50.00		
	Student Member	£ 75.00		
	Associate Member	£100.00		
✓	ADDITIONAL MEMBER ITEMS	Quantity	Cost	TOTAL AMOUNT
	Additional copies of Annual Licence <i>(ONLY available to Full Members with a Licence, as above)</i>		£10.00	£
	Member's Lapel Badge		£ 5.00	£
	Member's Window Sticker		£ 2.45	£
	Member's Tie (normal straight tie or clip on)		£10.00	£
	Member's 40 th Anniversary Tie (straight tie) – all funds from tie sales donated to the National Presidents chosen Charity.		£15.00	£
Total Additional Member Items				£
Membership Subscription (as above)				£
TOTAL TO PAY				£

Member's Signature:

✓	Payment Method
	Cheque - enclosed <i>(Cheques to be made payable to the British Institute of Funeral Directors)</i>
	BACS (internet banking) Sort Code: 60-83-01 Account No.: 20336550 <i>(please quote your surname as the reference when paying by BACS / Internet Banking)</i>

To opt out of allowing your personal information to be shared, please tick the box.	<input type="checkbox"/>
---	--------------------------

PLEASE NOTE: If you are applying for a Licence, you must complete the 2025/2026 CPD Return and enclose it with your Subscription Renewal. CPD Returns will be checked and verified and you may be contacted and requested to supply additional information if we need further verification.

2025/2026

1st April 2022-31st March 2023

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CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT RECORD

NAME:

MEMBERSHIP NUMBER:

Date	CPD provider (Please include: name, address and contact details)	Subject matter & training activity received	Comments	Number of hours
TOTAL				

*All the activities must have been undertaken between 01/04/24 - 31/03/25. No carry forwards of any description are acceptable.
 National Office will require this log in support of your Licence application for 2025/2026. This information must be retained for a minimum of three years.
 A continuation sheet may be used.*



BRITISH INSTITUTE OF FUNERAL DIRECTORS

APPLICATION FOR FULL MEMBERSHIP - 2025/26

FULL NAME		
Address:		
		Post Code:
Telephone:	Home:	Business:
Mobile:		
Email:		
Website: www.		

Details of qualifications ie Diploma in Funeral Service or Diploma in Funeral Practice

Please complete and return this form to National Office with evidence of your qualifications. ie. a copy of your NAFD Diploma Certificate or IFD Cert FP Certificate. Once we have checked these we will provide you with our bank details for you to send payment prior to us issuing your membership certificate.
I Declare that the information furnished by me as part of this Application is correct and I agree to comply with the Rules of the Institute including the Code of Ethics.
I Acknowledge that any Membership Certificate issued to me will remain the property of the Institute
I Confirm that on termination of my Membership of the Institute, for any reason, I will return my Membership Certificate and cease using the logo or any advertisement containing reference to the Institute.
I Agree to my details being shared with Institute members

Signature:	Date:
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Please forward the completed application form to:

British Institute of Funeral Directors

BIFD National Office 2 Heather Ridge Arcade Heatherside Camberley Surrey GU15 1AX

Tel: 0800 032 2733 Email: admin@bifd.org.uk Web: www.bifd.org.uk



BRITISH INSTITUTE OF FUNERAL DIRECTORS
APPLICATION FOR ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP - 2025/26

FULL NAME or COMPANY NAME	
Address:	
Post Code:	
Telephone: Home:	Business:
Mobile:	
Email:	
Website: www.	

Involvement with the funeral/bereavement sector :

<p>Please complete and return this form to National Office. Once the Board of Directors have approved your application, we will provide you with our bank details for you to send payment prior to us issuing your membership certificate.</p>
<p>I Declare that the information furnished by me as part of this Application is correct and I agree to comply with the Rules of the Institute including the Code of Ethics.</p>
<p>I Acknowledge that any Membership Certificate issued to me will remain the property of the Institute</p>
<p>I Confirm that on termination of my Membership of the Institute, for any reason, I will return my Membership Certificate and cease using the logo or any advertisement containing reference to the Institute.</p>
<p>I Agree to my details being shared with Institute members</p>

Signature:	Date:
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Please forward the completed application form to:

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Medical examiners update from the MoJ

Dear all,

Thank you for all your work to implement the Death Certification Reforms on 9 September 2024. In the 5 months since that date, there have been around 224,000 deaths registered and based on 2023 trends we estimate that there have been around 183,000 cremations since 9 September 2024. We are extremely grateful for your ongoing support in helping to embed these important changes that better protect the public.

Hazardous medical device information

As expected with changes of this magnitude, there have been some teething issues, in particular around the flow of information relating to hazardous medical devices. We have heard, in particular, some concerns about the frequency with which 'don't know' is ticked on form Cremation 6.

The need for information about hazardous medical devices to be passed through the system pre-dates the Death Certification Reforms: prior to 9 September 2024, in coronial cases the coroner would only notify the crematorium about medical devices present in the deceased person if they had this information as a result of examining medical notes or completing a post-mortem examination. This information would usually have been included as part of the e-mail sent alongside the form Cremation 6. If the coroner did not know whether a device was present, they would simply provide the form Cremation 6 and no further information. Post 9 September 2024, where information relating to hazardous medical devices is available, we expect the coroner to provide that information on form Cremation 6; this includes whether the device has been removed or not. We therefore expect the same procedures to be used when the coroner indicates they don't know as was the case prior to the 9 September 2024 when this information was not provided. This might include the MR making enquiries with the coroner's office.

If the presence of hazardous medical devices is not known and the coroner's office has confirmed they do not have the information (and the coroners have provided this information on form Cremation 6) then you may find it useful to get in touch with the referring attending practitioner (AP), or the pathologist (if known).

In relation to non-coronial cases, it is the responsibility of the AP to complete the MCCD and to provide information relating to hazardous medical devices from deceased patient's medical notes. Guidance is provided to the AP on how to complete the MCCD, which includes a list of potentially hazardous implantable medical devices. You can find this guidance at this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/medical-certificate-of-cause-of-death-mccd-guidance-for-medical-practitioners/guidance-for-medical-practitioners-completing-medical-certificates-of-cause-of-death-in-england-and-wales>. MRs should therefore direct questions and concerns related to the presence of hazardous medical devices to the AP, copying in their local ME for information.

In the very small minority of cases where there is no AP and the case has been passed from the coroner to the ME because the death was natural, an ME MCCD will be issued. In such a case, where information about hazardous implants is available in patient records available to the ME, the ME will add that information to the MCCD, so it flows through to the registrar.

We recognise there continue to be issues in ensuring that crematoria have accurate and complete information on the presence of hazardous medical devices and we want to take this opportunity to reassure you all that we are taking these concerns very seriously, and we continue to work with officials across government as well as key stakeholders to ensure we reach a more satisfactory position as quickly as possible.

Steps we have taken so far include:

Working with the Department and Health and Social Care to ensure that APs understand that it is their responsibility to complete the MCCD, including providing information on hazardous medical implants, and the impact of failing to pass on this relevant information has on crematoria.

Working with the Chief Coroner's Office on this same issue – we have asked coroners when selecting the 'don't know' option for presence of hazardous implant on form Cremation 6 to provide the rationale for that conclusion so that the recipient of the form can understand the reason, before determining suitable next steps.

Medical referees

As you will all know, in October 2024 we conducted a survey of crematorium managers and MRs on the future of medical referees. We thank all participants for their input.

We are currently analysing the responses and considering next steps and will engage further with the sector once our policy analysis is complete, but we want to take this opportunity to reiterate that any change to the role of the MR will be subject to consultation with stakeholders and will require the laying of legislation. We are committed to working with the sector to determine a suitable lead-in time to support any change required. We also recognise the importance of allowing the current system to stabilise before any further actions are taken, and will provide an update, including timings for any next steps, in due course.

Phil Ramsden

Policy Manager

Funeral Sector, Burials and Cremation Policy Team

The BIFD Certificate in Funeral Service: A Step Toward Professional Excellence

In the realm of funeral service, the BIFD (British Institute of Funeral Directors) Certificate in Funeral Service stands as a vital stepping stone for those aspiring to deepen their expertise and advance their careers. This Level 3 certificate, accredited by Greenwich University, not only provides foundational knowledge but also prepares candidates for further studies, such as the Diploma in Funeral Services.

Here are just a few of the subjects covered within the course

The Functioning of the Funeral Office

The funeral office is the heart of funeral service operations. Here, administrative tasks such as arranging services, coordinating transportation, and handling legal documentation occur. The BIFD Certificate equips students with essential skills in communication, organisation, and customer service, ensuring they can manage these responsibilities effectively. Learning about the logistics of funeral service management prepares individuals to provide compassionate support during difficult times.

Understanding Funerals and Grief

Funerals serve as a crucial step in the grieving process, allowing families to honour their loved ones while beginning to heal. The BIFD Certificate emphasises the importance of grief support, focusing on how to assist bereaved families through their emotional journeys. Understanding the psychological aspects of grief enables funeral service professionals to provide the necessary care and support, helping individuals navigate their loss while fostering a sense of community.

Obtaining the BIFD Certificate in Funeral Service is more than just achieving a qualification; it is a commitment to professional development and compassionate care. With a solid historical background, an understanding of religious practices, operational knowledge of funeral offices, and insights into grief, graduates of this program are well-prepared to make a meaningful impact in the field of funeral service.

The journey toward a diploma in funeral services begins here, paving the way for a fulfilling career dedicated to serving others in their most challenging moments.

Respected Funeral Director has gone back to his Devon roots with new expanded role

An experienced funeral professional has found himself back where it all began for him in the industry following a recent promotion.

James Ray, 45, began his career at a local Funeral Directors in Teignmouth back in 2000, before joining Drakes of Torbay three years later helping families in the local area and becoming a well-known and respected Funeral Director.

He was then asked to take up a wide-ranging role based in Surrey for Funeral Partners where he successfully built a portfolio of businesses serving communities of all faiths, specialising in Muslim, Italian, and Nepalese funerals before his remit expanded into Berkshire and North London.



James Ray

But now, James has been made Regional Director for Southern England, Wales, and North London for Funeral Partners bringing him back to his roots.

Funeral Partners' outstanding network in the region includes Drakes, Torbay & District Funeral Directors and JH Way Funeral Services.

James said: "It is wonderful to see so many familiar faces, within the teams in Torbay and from Teignmouth, like Caz Denning who also brings 23 years of service and dedication to the industry.

"I originally got into the industry after seeing a role advertised, but someone told me the job wouldn't suit me. I've always had a desire to prove people wrong and have since found that helping people when they are at a low ebb is the most rewarding experience you can have.

"A lot has changed since I started, but what remains is the care we all must give to our clients at what is an incredibly difficult time.

"I am excited to return to Devon and continue my journey with Funeral Partners. I look forward to working with our dedicated team to support families during their most challenging times.

"The care and presentation of every single person's loved one is of the utmost importance to me.

"I play a pivotal role in ensuring the high standards that I expect along with my team are passed down to the next generation of funeral professionals within our team of dedicated service providers."

The funeral business is a fixture in James' family with his wife Paula working as a Regional Support Manager and eldest son Callum enjoying his role as a Funeral Manager in Berkshire and Oxfordshire. His youngest son Ben is studying at university in Dundee.

Matthew Barber, Chief Operating Officer at Funeral Partners said: "We are thrilled to welcome James back to Devon, and are excited that he agreed to lead the way in our largest region.

"His extensive experience and dedication to providing compassionate and personalised funeral services make him an invaluable addition to our team."



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Sam Kershaw
Chief Executive Officer
07834 531822
sam.kershaw@funeralpartners.co.uk

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Steve Wilkinson
Mergers & Acquisitions Director
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Your reputation is our reputation



Funeral Partners marks 10,000 years of heritage following busy acquisition period

Following an extremely busy period of acquisitions, the country's third-largest funeral business now have an incredible 10,000 years of heritage within their high-quality network, with some of the Funeral Directors dating back hundreds of years.

Funeral Partners underscored their status as the UK's fastest growing funeral company after acquiring a record-breaking 12 new businesses in 12 months in 2024 - their busiest calendar year on record.

Acquiring funeral businesses, the length and breadth of the country from Dorset in the South West to Bishop Auckland in the North east brings the network to more than 280 funeral homes and 140 family brands.

These were:

- Nicholas O'Hara Funeral Directors in Dorset
- W Sherry & Sons in London (including JR Barton & Sons Funeral Directors)
- George Brooke Funeral Directors in West Yorkshire
 - M. Rushton Funeral Directors in Southport
 - Joseph O'Connell Funeral Service in Crewe
- Howard Chadwick Funeral Service in Oxfordshire
 - White Dove Funeral Home in Staffordshire
 - Gibson's Funeral Service in Bishop Auckland
- G E Hartley & Sons Funeral Directors in West Yorkshire
 - Murray's Funeral Directors in Staffordshire
 - Malone & Fox Funeral Directors in Glasgow



Helen and Judith Brooke
from George Brooke
Funeral Directors

Despite such a successful year, the acquisitions team are already planning for a busy 2025 with a healthy pipeline of high quality businesses set to join in the coming months.

As well as increasing their footprint in England and Scotland, Funeral Partners are looking to expand the number of businesses they have in Northern Ireland and Wales

Sam Kershaw, Chief Executive, said it is an honour each time another business joins Funeral Partners. He said: "I'd like to thank every former owner who has chosen to put their trust in us to continue their legacy and place in the heart of their local community."

"The continued support of the former owners, some who have decided to stay on to run the day-to-day business and others who have taken a step back and are ambassadors, keeping in touch and helping to keep the reputation and traditions of the business intact is so vital."

"This is not a responsibility we take lightly, and we are so proud a record number of businesses have joined us this last year"

"We know the increased regulation and the recent budget has changed the landscape for a number of independent owners."

"One of the most crucial benefits that we bring as a group is the central support office, the regulatory framework and care of the deceased policies and procedures, which are there to protect our teams and the clients. We take this part of our operational commitment very seriously and continue to invest in these areas to ensure we remain compliant, whilst providing exemplary care to all our families."

“In the current economic climate, we are all aware of the impact of increased costs of products and services from suppliers as well as the impacts on business and capital gains taxes. Now, may be the right time for some funeral home owners to look at maximising the income from any business sale to safeguard the financial security of their business and future legacy.”

All acquired businesses retain their own name and brand, which was especially important to Helen and Judith Brooke of George Brooke Funeral Directors in West Yorkshire, who joined the network last year, with a business founded and grown by their father.

Helen said: “We were determined to keep our dad’s name as a legacy for our family business – we felt it deserved to live on in our community. It was a big reason for us joining Funeral Partners. We are also delighted to be selling Choice Funeral Plans which is securing our funeral business from our local families for years to come.”



Funeral Partners CEO Sam Kershaw with Michael and Michelle Rushton from M. Rushton Funeral Directors in Southport

Funeral Partners’ funeral plan company Choice recently celebrated their ten-year anniversary with the launch of a new website. Since regulation Choice have launched an Unattended (Direct) Cremation Plan product, realigned plan prices with a national price point across all funeral homes and, relaunched the optimised website with the ability to purchase a plan online.

The new website supports the company’s digital growth ambitions, with research showing that more and more people are now comfortable with purchasing financial products like funeral plans online, particularly the simpler Unattended Cremation Plan. The website has a more modern visual design with an improved customer purchase process for web and mobile devices and now includes the ability to pay for plans by instalments. Customers can choose from three plans that best suits their requirements – Choice Plus, Choice Essentials as well as the Unattended Cremation, and can nominate from over 280 Funeral Partners funeral homes from across the UK, to arrange and conduct the funeral at the time of need.

Kelly Hailou, Marketing Director said “The new website looks absolutely fantastic, with a fresh, modern design and a smoother customer experience. It is already proving hugely popular with both our funeral home clients and new customers looking in the market for a funeral plan provider, to put plans in place for the future. Having a full online service means that people now have the choice where and how to make their purchase. They can speak to our brilliant, dedicated funeral professionals in one of our branches up and down the country, or one our funeral plan specialists at the Choice office in Torquay.

“Or if they prefer with ease from the comfort of their own home online through the website, where they can access all the information they need, to choose the plan that is right for them.”

Sam reinforced the importance of Funeral Plan sales to the future success of all the funeral homes.

He said: “Our Choice Funeral Plans are a significant part of the value that we can bring to an acquisition partnership, ensuring that families are able to record their wishes, buy a plan and choose a Funeral Director they know and trust to arrange and conduct their funeral ahead of time.

“This secures business for the years ahead; I’m pleased to see our plan sales going from strength to strength. “We are proud of our reputation and every business that is part of the Funeral Partners family, if you’d like to hear more about joining Funeral Partners, please don’t hesitate to get in touch for a confidential, no obligation discussion.”

For more information about joining Funeral Partners, visit <https://corporate.funeralpartners.co.uk/>
For more information about Choice Funeral Plans, visit www.choiceplan.co.uk or call 0808 2586 775.

Five Years On: Reflecting on COVID-19 and Honouring the Role of Funeral Directors

As the United Kingdom marks the five-year anniversary of the COVID-19 pandemic, the nation pauses to reflect on the lives lost, the resilience of communities, and the sacrifices made during one of the most challenging periods in modern history. Among those who stood steadfast throughout were funeral directors—dedicated professionals who bore the weight of an unprecedented crisis while ensuring dignity for the deceased and solace for the bereaved.

Funeral Directors on the Frontline

While much recognition has been given to NHS workers and care staff, funeral directors also played an essential frontline role, navigating a landscape of constant change, restriction, and grief. As the pandemic unfolded, they faced a surge in deaths, often working around the clock to ensure that every individual was cared for with the respect they deserved. PPE shortages, ever-changing government guidelines, and the emotional toll of supporting grieving families under severe restrictions made their role not only logistically challenging but also emotionally harrowing.

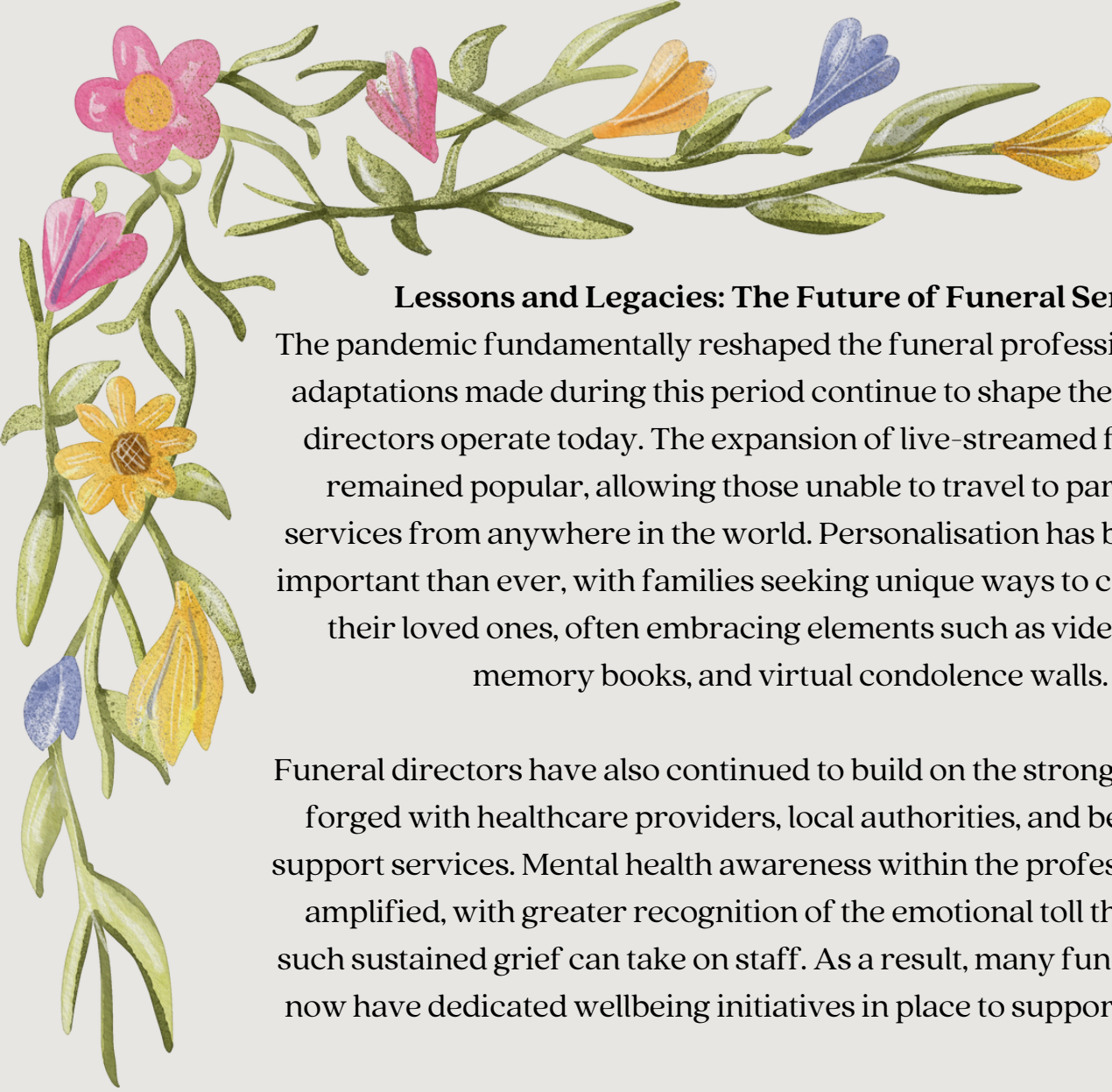
Social distancing measures meant that many families were unable to say a final goodbye in person, and funeral directors found themselves at the heart of a delicate balancing act—complying with safety regulations while providing as much comfort as possible to the bereaved. The restriction on attendance at funerals meant that many ceremonies took place with only a handful of mourners present, forcing funeral professionals to innovate new ways to include loved ones, from live-streamed services to personalised keepsakes.

Commemorative Events

As we reach this solemn milestone, several events are planned across the UK to remember those who died during the pandemic and to recognise the contribution of those who provided care and support. Nationally, a commemorative service will take place at St Paul's Cathedral in London, attended by representatives from across the NHS, and key organisations involved in pandemic response. Similar memorials are being arranged in local communities, with services held in churches, cemeteries, and crematoria to offer a space for collective remembrance.

The National Day of Reflection, first introduced by the charity Marie Curie, will be observed once again, with a nationwide minute's silence and candle-lit vigils to honour the lives lost.





Lessons and Legacies: The Future of Funeral Service

The pandemic fundamentally reshaped the funeral profession, and many adaptations made during this period continue to shape the way funeral directors operate today. The expansion of live-streamed funerals has remained popular, allowing those unable to travel to participate in services from anywhere in the world. Personalisation has become more important than ever, with families seeking unique ways to commemorate their loved ones, often embracing elements such as video tributes, memory books, and virtual condolence walls.

Funeral directors have also continued to build on the strong relationships forged with healthcare providers, local authorities, and bereavement support services. Mental health awareness within the profession has been amplified, with greater recognition of the emotional toll that handling such sustained grief can take on staff. As a result, many funeral directors now have dedicated wellbeing initiatives in place to support their teams.

A Moment to Remember

Five years on, the anniversary of COVID-19 serves as a poignant reminder of the collective loss and sacrifice endured. For funeral directors, it is also a moment to reflect on the profound impact of their work during that time—providing care, compassion, and dignity against overwhelming odds. As commemorative events unfold across the UK, the British Institute of Funeral Directors acknowledges the unwavering commitment of its members and the lasting legacy they have created in honouring the departed.

As we remember those we lost, we also acknowledge those who stood by our communities in their darkest hours. Their dedication, courage, and adaptability will forever be a part of the story of this time in history.



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Preserving memories with the Obitus Video Book

For those who have experienced loss, memories become one of life's most precious treasures. The desire to hold onto those special moments is deeply felt, and advancements in technology now offer new ways to keep them close. The Obitus Video Book is a modern and meaningful keepsake designed to help families stay connected with their loved ones long after the funeral service has ended.

Blending tradition with innovation, the Video Book provides a tangible and elegant way to revisit cherished moments. Unlike formats such as DVDs or USBs, which often require additional devices and technical know-how, the Video Book is a self-contained solution. There are no complex menus or additional devices required - just open the cover and press play. This ease of use makes it an ideal choice for all generations, from young family members to elderly relatives.

A unique and personalised keepsake

The Video Book is more than a memento; it is a deeply personal tribute to a loved one. With a high-quality LCD screen encased in a linen-bound cover, it offers a comforting way to relive a service or a tribute video at any time. Each Video Book is personalised with the loved one's name and service date, making it a truly unique keepsake.

Families have the option to include recordings of the funeral service, a tribute video, or both, ensuring that the content reflects what matters most to them.



Why families are choosing the Obitus Video Book

Losing a loved one is never easy, but the memories shared with them can offer solace. The Obitus Video Book allows families to preserve and revisit those moments in a way that is both practical and deeply personal. Its blend of simplicity, elegance, and innovation sets it apart from traditional keepsakes, offering an experience that is as meaningful as it is accessible.

Families who have chosen the Video Book speak highly of its ability to provide comfort during difficult times. Many appreciate how easy it is to use, particularly for those who may struggle with technology, while others value the ability to watch a loved one's tribute or service without needing additional devices. The personalised details and high-quality presentation make it a cherished keepsake, helping families feel connected to their loved one whenever they need it most.

For those seeking a modern yet timeless way to honour a loved one's memory, the Video Book has proven to be a thoughtful and well-received choice. It offers an invaluable connection to the past, ensuring that special moments remain within reach whenever they are needed most.

Visit www.obitus.com/keepsakes to see more.

Obitus

Forever: The Perfect Tribute to a Loved One

In life, we cherish the memories of those we love moments that warm our hearts and bring comfort even when they are no longer with us. What better way to honour their legacy than with a living tribute that returns year after year in a beautiful display of colour and fragrance? With Name Your Own Rose, you can create a lasting remembrance by naming a rose in honor of a beloved family member and watching it bloom for generations to come.

Unlike fleeting memorials, a rose is a timeless symbol of love and remembrance. Every spring and summer, as its petals unfurl, it serves as a gentle reminder of those who have touched our lives. Whether planted in a garden, a special memorial space, or given as a meaningful gift to relatives, Name Your Own Rose offers a deeply personal way to keep memories alive.

Naming a rose is more than just a tribute its a gift that continues to grow. Imagine the joy of seeing grandma Grace or David's Legacy blooming year after year, bringing beauty and comfort to all who see it. These uniquely named roses also make thoughtful gifts for anniversaries, birthdays, or special remembrance ceremonies.

For those looking to create a shared family tribute, we offer special pricing for purchases of six or more roses, making it easy to spread love and remembrance among relatives and friends.

Plant a rose. Name it with love. Let it bloom forever.



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A heartfelt way to add a personal touch to tributes of your client's loved ones.

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Scan to register or visit cbce.org.uk for more information

An online tribute page can be a source of comfort to a bereaved family, and a great addition to your service

In the UK, there is growing awareness of online memorial pages. People are increasingly willing to engage with them, by making a donation or adding content. Many bereaved families will expect their funeral arranger to offer an online tribute as part of their service.

Tribute pages offer far more than a funeral notice and donation facility. Jutta Kamp, Head of Engagement at MuchLoved, said, "Online tributes provide a wonderful place to remember a loved one. They can also create also sense of community and somewhere to come together, even if there is no formal gathering to mark the death."

"We see a lot of activity on MuchLoved tribute pages around the time of the funeral, but 70% of activity is on tributes that are over a year old. Tributes help people to maintain the bond with their loved one, which we know is so important in bereavement, and bring friends and families together to talk about their memories."

Online tributes are as unique as the people they are created for, and the content posted by friends and family is treasured by bereaved people. These are just a few of the wonderful comments received by MuchLoved:

"I have lit a candle for my dearest husband, bless you for making this possible"

"The page means so much to myself, family, friends and my husband's colleagues"

"I looked through these with more smiles than tears. Such lovely memories"

"I love this site... it's a fantastic keepsake to remember my dad by"

MuchLoved data shows there are also benefits to charities and funeral directors, especially if the family is given access to the tribute and is able to continue using it after the funeral:

- The average number of pictures on a tribute can increase from 3.2 to 10.5. These priceless photos will help families to remember their loved-one for years to come
- Tributes raise 48% more in donations when the family has access to the page. Supporting a charity that's close to their hearts can be great source of comfort.
- When the family looks after the page, 84% of fundraising tributes attract donations. For tributes without a family owner, this figure is only 75%

With direct cremation growing in popularity, you can help families to experience the comfort of coming together by creating an online tribute for them and making this part of your service. Tribute pages can help you to connect with local charities through fundraising activity. They also help to promote your brand in the local community as MuchLoved tributes can be personalised for your funeral business.

If you would like to find out more about including tributes as part of your service to families, please get in touch: support@muchloved.com or 01494 722818

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In memory of my dearest Mum

This page is a tribute to my beautiful Mum, Florence Neal. My first friend and my b I miss you so much.

Remembrance Service

Florence's funeral service is at Croydon Crematorium on Wednesday 3rd August 2025 at 2pm. Family flowers only.

📅 9th April 2025 at 2:00 pm

Croydon Crematorium
Mitcham Road, Croydon CR9 3AT

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For more information: 01494 722818 • support@muchloved.com

muchloved.com

SCOTTISH REGULATION

Regulations are now in place for Scotland as from this month.

New Burial and Cremation forms are to be used and a new Code of Practice, set out by the Scottish Government, for all Funeral Directors in Scotland has been written and must be used.

The new Code of Practice has eight sections to it, and each section has their own subsections.

These sections are;

- Introduction
- Engagement of the Funeral Director and Transfer of the Deceased
- Care of the Deceased and Premises Used by the Funeral Director
- Planning the Funeral Service According to the Wishes of the Deceased and the Bereaved
- Delivery of the Funeral
- Complaints
- Business Continuity and Managing Risks
- Footnotes

The full Code of Practice and new forms can be found on the website

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/funeral-director-code-practice-2/>



Tributes Extends Keepsake Heart Range

Painted white option offers eco-friendly solution to potential wastage



Tributes, the West Sussex based supplier to the funeral sector, has extended its best-selling wooden Tribute Heart range with a white colour option. The move has been driven by the company's commitment to sustainability, in a drive to reduce waste.

Recent feedback from funeral directors identified that some customers were concerned that the natural grain in the wood might cause uneven, dark lines or markings. Offering a painted version establishes an elegant new style for families to choose from, without the need to sideline any of the Hearts once they'd been carefully carved.

Tributes only uses FSC-certified wood from sustainable sources. Conscious that any concerns about the natural grain could lead to wastage, the team wanted to ensure that any Tributes Hearts which might not be as aesthetically pleasing still had the opportunity to be used as a keepsake memorial item.

Tori Bush, Sales Director at Tributes, commented: "As well as offering more variety to our funeral directors and the families they work with, we've been keen to find ways to reduce waste across our operations. Wood, by its very nature, isn't uniform and so offering painted options helps us ensure that every keepsake carved can help an individual remember their loved one."





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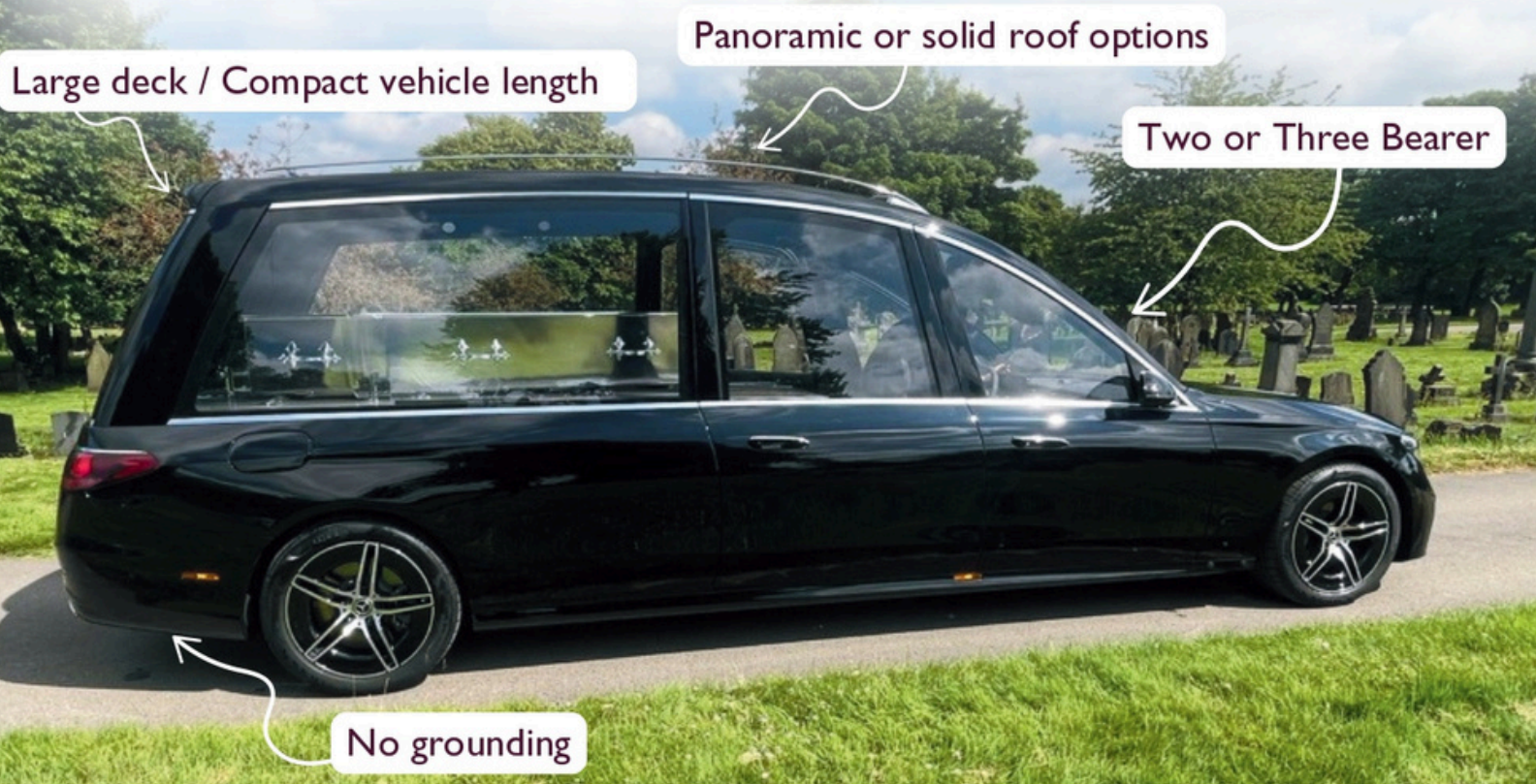
For more information visit the FFMA website: www.ffma.co.uk

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